Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A circuit for testing a communication system that is subdivided into functional layers comprising: ~~comprises~~

a port that allows communication by a test apparatus directly with any layer that is higher than a first layer of the functional layers without the communication previously having to pass through the first layer, the first layer being a physical layer on an optical transmission medium, and data in the layer that is higher than the first layer comprising electrical signals; and

two or more ports, each of the ports providing direct access to data from a separate layer that is higher than the first layer, the ports separate from connections to the optical transmission media, the two or more ports adapted for outputting data to a test apparatus and for receiving input stimulation data from the test apparatus.

2. (Original) The circuit arrangement according to claim 1 wherein the functional layers correspond to an OSI reference model.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) The circuit arrangement according to claim 1 ~~claim 3~~ wherein processing of the communication is realized on a single chip, with the port being provided on the chip.

5. (Currently Amended) The circuit arrangement according to claim 1 ~~claim 3~~ wherein processing of the communication is realized on a first chip and the port is on a second chip, the first and second chips being linked with each other for data transfer.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for testing a switch for a telecommunication network that is subdivided into functional layers comprising the steps of:

providing the switch with a circuit arrangement having ports ~~a port~~ that allow ~~allows~~ communication by a test apparatus directly with any layer that is higher than a first layer of the functional layers without the communication previously having to pass through the first layer, the first layer being a physical layer on an optical transmission medium, and data in the layer that is higher than the first layer comprising electrical signals;

outputting response data from the port to the test apparatus; and

analyzing the response data by the test apparatus.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6 further comprising the step of inputting test data into the port before the outputting step.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to one of claims 6 or 7 wherein the test data comprise a stimulation signal.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8 wherein the response data comprise a response to the stimulation signal.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the response data comprise a monitoring signal.

11. (Previously Presented) An optical switch connected to optical transmission media, the switch comprising:

a processor for processing data from a bit transfer layer to two or more higher-level protocol layers, the bit transfer layer being a physical layer on the optical transmission media, data in the two or more higher-level protocol layers being electrical signals; and

two or more ports, each of the ports providing direct access to data from a separate one of the higher-level protocol layers, the ports separate from connections to the optical transmission media, the two or more ports adapted for outputting data to a test apparatus and for receiving input stimulation data from the test apparatus.